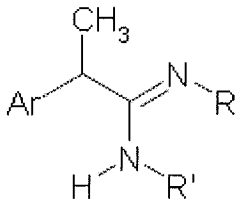
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) Amidines of formula (I)



(I)

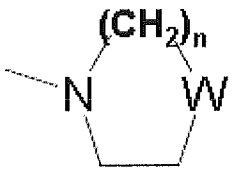
and pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof,

wherein Ar is selected from:

3'-benzoylphenyl, 3'-(4-chloro-benzoyl)-phenyl, 3'-(4-methyl-benzoyl)-phenyl, 3'-acetyl-phenyl, 3'-propionyl-phenyl, 3'-isobutanoyl-phenyl, 4'-trifluoromethanesulfonyloxy-phenyl, 4'-benzenesulfonyloxy-phenyl, 4'-trifluoromethanesulfonylamino-phenyl, 4'- benzenesulfonylamino-phenyl, 4'-benzenesulfonylmethyl-phenyl, 4'-acetoxyphenyl, 4'- propionyloxy-phenyl, 4'-benzoyloxy-phenyl, 4'acetylamino-phenyl, 4'propionylamino-phenyl, 4'-benzoylamino-phenyl;

~~R is~~R' is selected from

- H, C_1-C_5-alkyl, phenyl, C_1-C_5-phenyalkyl, C_1-C_5-cycloalkyl, C_1-C_5-alkenyl, C_1-C_5-alkoxy;
- a residue of formula $-(CH_2)n$-NRaRb wherein n is an integer from 0 to 5 and each Ra and Rb, which may be the same or different, are C_1-C_6-alkyl, C_1-C_6-alkenyl or, alternatively, Ra and Rb, together with the nitrogen atom to which they are bound, form a heterocycle from 3 to 7 members of formula (II),

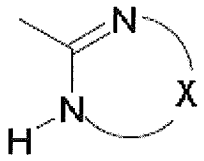


(II)

wherein W represents a single bond, O, S, N-Rc, Rc being H, C_1-C_6-alkyl or C_1-C_6-alkylphenyl.

~~R' is~~ R is H, CH_3, ~~CH_2CH_3~~. CH_2CH_3,

R and R' can alternatively, form a heterocycle from 5 to 7 members of formula (III),

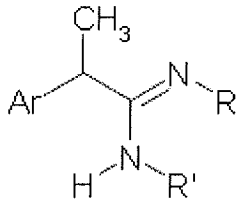


(III)

wherein X represents a residue -O(CH_2)n- wherein n is an integer from 1 to 3, or a residue -(CH_2)n- wherein n is an integer from 2 to 4, or the ethylene residue –CH=CH-.

2-11. (canceled)

12. (currently amended) A compound of formula (I)



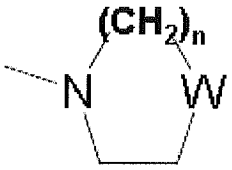
(I)

and pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof,

wherein Ar is a phenyl group non-substituted or substituted by one or more groups independently selected from halogen, C_1-C_4-alkyl, C_1-C_4-alkoxy, hydroxy, C_1-C_4-acyloxy, phenoxy, cyano, nitro, amino, C_1-C_4-acylamino, halogen-C_1-C_3-alkyl, halogen C_1-C_3-alkoxy, benzoyl or a substituted or unsubstituted 5-6 membered heteroaryl ring selected from pyridine, pyrrole, ~~thiofene~~thiophene, furane, and indole;

~~R is~~ R' is selected from the group consisting of:

H, C_1-C_5-alkyl, phenyl, C_1-C_5-phenyalkyl, C_1-C_5-cycloalkyl, C_1-C_5-alkenyl, C_1-C_5-alkoxy and residues of formula $-(CH_2)n$-NRaRb, wherein n is an integer from 1 to 5 and Ra and Rb are independently C_1-C_6-alkyl, C_1-C_6-alkenyl or Ra and Rb, together with the nitrogen atom to which they are bound, form a heterocycle from 3 to 7 members of formula (II),



(II)

wherein W represents a single bond, O, S, N-Rc, Rc being H, C_1-C_6-alkyl or C_1-C_6-alkylphenyl;
~~R' is~~ R is H, CH_3 or CH_2CH_3,
with the proviso that:
if R and R' are both H, then Ar is not non-substituted phenyl, 2-chlorophenyl, 2,6-dichlorophenyl or 4-isobutylphenyl;
if R is H and R' is C_2-alkyl, then Ar is not non-substituted phenyl; and
if R is H and R' is n-C_4-alkyl, then Ar is not non-substituted phenyl.

13. (previously presented) The compound according to Claim 12, wherein Ar is selected from 3'-benzoylphenyl, 3'-(4-chloro-benzoyl)-phenyl, 3'-(4-methyl-benzoyl)-phenyl, 3'-acetyl-phenyl, 3'-propionyl-phenyl, 3'-isobutanoyl-phenyl, 4'-trifluoromethanesulfonyloxy-phenyl, 4'-benzenesulfonyloxy-phenyl, 4'-trifluoromethanesulfonylamino-phenyl, 4'- benzenesulfonylamino-phenyl, 4'-benzenesulfonylmethyl-phenyl, 4'-acetoxyphenyl, 4'- propionyloxy-phenyl, 4'-benzoyloxy-phenyl, 4'acetylamino-phenyl, 4'propionylamino-phenyl, 4'-benzoylamino-phenyl.

14. (currently amended) The compound according to Claim 12, wherein ~~R is~~ R' is selected from
- hydrogen
- a residue of formula $-(CH_2)_n$-NRaRb, wherein n is an integer 2 or 3 and the group NRaRb is selected from N,N-dimethylamine or 1-piperidyl, and ~~R' is~~ R is H, or R and R' form a

heterocycle of formula (III), where X represents a residue -O(CH_2)n- wherein n is the integer 1 or 2, or a residue -(CH_2)$_2$.

15. (currently amended) The compound according to Claim 12 selected from:

~~(R,S) (2-(4-isobutylphenyl)propionamidine hydrochloride~~

(+) (2-(4-isobutylphenyl)propionamidine hydrochloride

(-) (2-(4-isobutylphenyl)propionamidine hydrochloride

(R,S) 2-(3-benzoylphenyl)propionamidine hydrochloride

(R,S) 2-[(3-fluoro-4-phenyl)phenyl]propionamidine hydrochloride

(R,S) 2-(4-trifluoromethanesulfonyloxyphenyl)propionamidine hydrochloride

(R,S) 2-(5-benzoyl-2-thiophene)propionamidine hydrochloride

(R,S) 2-(4-isobutylphenyl)-N-[3"-(N'-piperidino)propyl]propionamidine dihydrochloride

(R,S) 2-(4-isobutylphenyl)-N-methyl-propionamidine hydrochloride

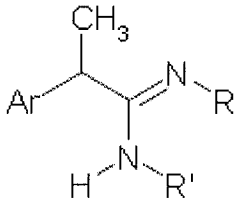
(R,S) 2-(3-benzoylphenyl)- N-[3-(N,N-dimethylamino)propyl]propionamidine hydrochloride

(R,S) 2-(4-isobutylphenyl)propionamidine acetate salt

(R,S) 2-(4-isobutylphenyl)-N-[3-(N,N-dimethylamino)propyl] propionamidine, and

(R,S) 2-(4-isobutylphenyl)-N-benzyl propionamidine.

16. (currently amended) A process for the preparation of compounds of formula (I)



(I)

and pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof,

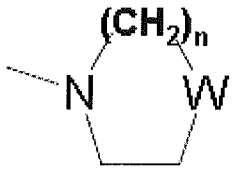
wherein Ar is selected from:

3'-benzoylphenyl, 3'-(4-chloro-benzoyl)-phenyl, 3'-(4-methyl-benzoyl)-phenyl,

3'-acetyl-phenyl, 3'-propionyl-phenyl, 3'-isobutanoyl-phenyl, 4'-trifluoromethanesulfonyloxy-phenyl, 4'-benzenesulfonyloxy-phenyl, 4'-trifluoromethanesulfonylamino-phenyl, 4'- benzenesulfonylamino-phenyl, 4'-benzenesulfonylmethyl-phenyl, 4'-acetoxyphenyl, 4'- propionyloxy-phenyl, 4'-benzoyloxy-phenyl, 4'acetylamino-phenyl, 4'propionylamino-phenyl, 4'-benzoylamino-phenyl;

~~R is~~ R' is selected from

- H, C_1-C_5-alkyl, phenyl, C_1-C_5-phenyalkyl, C_1-C_5-cycloalkyl, C_1-C_5-alkenyl, C_1-C_5-alkoxy;
- a residue of formula $-(CH_2)n$-NRaRb wherein n is an integer from 0 to 5 and each Ra and Rb, which may be the same or different, are C_1-C_6-alkyl, C_1-C_6-alkenyl or, alternatively, Ra and Rb, together with the nitrogen atom to which they are bound, form a heterocycle from 3 to 7 members of formula (II),

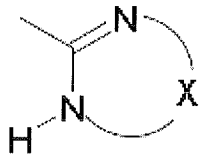


(II)

wherein W represents a single bond, O, S, N-Rc, Rc being H, C_1-C_6-alkyl or C_1-C_6-~~alkylphenyl.~~ alkylphenyl,

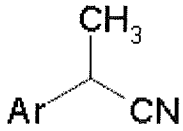
~~R' is~~ R is H, CH_3, ~~CH_2CH_3.~~ CH_2CH_3,

R and R' can alternatively, form a heterocycle from 5 to 7 members of formula (III),



(III)

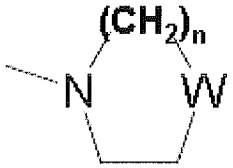
wherein X represents a residue -O(CH_2)n- wherein n is an integer from 1 to 3, or a residue -(CH_2)n- wherein n is an integer from 2 to 4, or the ethylene residue –CH=CH-; comprising reacting a nitrile derivative of formula (IV),



(IV)

wherein Ar is a phenyl group non-substituted or substituted by one or more groups independently selected from halogen, C_1-C_4-alkyl, C_1-C_4-alkoxy, hydroxy, C_1-C_4-acyloxy, phenoxy, cyano, nitro, amino, C_1-C_4-acylamino, halogen-C_1-C_3-alkyl, halogen C_1-C_3-alkoxy, benzoyl or a substituted or unsubstituted 5-6 membered heteroaryl ring selected from pyridine, pyrrole, ~~thiofene~~thiophene, furane, and indole, with an amine of formula NHR,

wherein R is selected from the group consisting of: - H, C_1-C_5-alkyl, phenyl, C_1-C_5-phenyalkyl, C_1-C_5-cycloalkyl, C_1-C_5-alkenyl, C_1-C_5-alkoxy; and residues of formula –(CH_2)n-NRaRb, wherein n is an integer from 1 to 5 and Ra and Rb are independently C_1-C_6-alkyl, C_1-C_6-alkenyl or Ra and Rb, together with the nitrogen atom to which they are bound, form a heterocycle from 3 to 7 members of formula (II),



(II)

wherein W represents a single bond, O, S, N-Rc, Rc being H, C_1-C_6-alkyl or C_1-C_6-alkylphenyl.

17. (previously presented) Pharmaceutical compositions comprising a compound according to claim 1 or 12 in admixture with a suitable carrier thereof.

18. (previously presented) A method for treatment of psoriasis, ulcerative colitis, melanoma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), bullous pemphigo, rheumatoid arthritis, idiopathic fibrosis, glomerulonephritis, or for the prevention and treatment of damage caused by ischemia and reperfusion comprising administering the composition of claim 17 to a patient in need thereof.

19. (previously presented) A method for inhibiting IL-8-induced chemotaxis of human polymorphonuclear cells, comprising contacting said cells with a compound of claim 1 or 12.